

Chapter 19

PRECONSTRUCTION MEETING

PRIOR TO THE MEETING

There is a time gap between the last design contact with a utility and the beginning of highway construction. During this time gap, there are usually several utility relocations taking place. **Someone** should monitor whether the planned relocations actually take place. In some regions the utility coordinator is responsible for monitoring this gap, in other regions it is the construction project manager assigned to the project. Another possibility is to have someone that is on construction projects during the summer months make these contacts during the winter months. This would be a good use of the person's construction expertise, as there are often construction-related questions from the utility companies.

Someone should contact the utilities prior to the preconstruction meeting and determine the status of the utility relocations. This contact often serves as a good reminder to the utility that they need to get the relocations done. Often, because of changes to our program, the utility has forgotten about the project. The earlier the contact is made, the more likely it is that relocations will be done prior to construction.

The WisDOT Construction and Materials Manual Procedure 2-5-2, Page 3 states, *"In the interest of expediting the work, the engineer will make early contact with local officials of utility companies who have not started required adjustments of their facilities and advise them of the date the contractor intends to start construction operations, stressing the need for early completion of necessary alterations."*

If the utility is contacted just prior to the preconstruction meeting, the contact can serve to inform them of the time and date of the preconstruction meeting. **Utilities should be invited to attend the preconstruction meeting.** (Construction and Materials Manual Procedure 2-5-2). If there is coordination between the utility and the highway contractor needed during construction, the importance of the utility attending the preconstruction meeting should be stressed. A written invitation is best, because it provides a permanent record that the utility was invited. A sample invitation to a preconstruction meeting is shown in [Figure 19-1](#). **Sending the invitation at least two weeks prior to the meeting is recommended.**

There are times when the highway contractor does not provide sufficient time between setting the preconstruction meeting and holding the meeting. This is a poor business practice, but it does occur. A telephone call to the utility will help assure that someone from the utility is able to attend. We must remember that their schedules are busy with other work that they must do, and they cannot always attend meetings scheduled at the last minute. The more advance warning we give them about a meeting, the more likely it is that they will attend. Our meeting will be more productive if they do attend. Respecting the time constraints of others is good business.

The person responsible for utility coordination during the design phase should also be invited to the preconstruction meeting. They are privy to information regarding the coordination that took place during the design stage, and may be able to assist in resolving any problems that arise.

The WisDOT Construction and Materials Manual Section 2-5-2 Page 3 states, *"Utility companies should be invited to attend the preconstruction conference. On projects with complex or extensive utility improvement, it is advisable to schedule a meeting of all affected utilities prior to the preconstruction conference to discuss schedules and coordinate efforts."* This works well for large urban projects or complex projects.

Also, please note that the Construction and Materials Manual Procedure 2-5-2 Page 3 states *“The District survey crew should stake the right-of-way, and other lines needed by the utilities in their work, as soon as possible in the progress of the project.”*

TRANS 220 PROJECTS

Trans. 220 allows the WisDOT to call a utility coordination meeting where attendance is mandatory by the utilities. Trans. 220.05(4) states ***“Upon owner request or its own initiative, when the department determines there is a potential for conflict between work plans, the department will schedule a meeting that the owners are required to attend to coordinate the work.”***

If there is utility work to be done during highway construction operations, the WisDOT can require those utilities to attend the pre-construction meeting to discuss the coordination that will occur during construction.

If you intend to **require** utility attendance at the meeting, you should state that in the preconstruction meeting invitation letter. Be sure to quote Trans. 220.05(4) in the invitation letter so that they know their attendance is mandatory. See sample letter in [Figure 19-3](#). As mentioned above, you must provide sufficient notice to the utility so that they can arrange to have someone attend the meeting. Also, please note that **only** utilities that have work that must be coordinated during construction can be required to attend the meeting.

AT THE MEETING

Early on in the preconstruction meeting the utilities portion of the special provisions should be discussed. Read or summarize the specials for each utility company. Ask the utility company representative to clarify anything that is unclear, and to verify that work has been done as planned. If a large exhibit of the project is available for the meeting, have the utility representative point out on the drawing what work remains to be done. This will help eliminate any uncertainty or misunderstanding.

If work has not been done as stated in the special provisions, find out when the work will be done, and determine if that will coincide with the contractors plan of operation. If the proposal is not acceptable, have the utility and contractor discuss until they come to a mutually agreeable solution.

If coordination is required during construction, for example, if the gas main will be lowered after the pavement has been removed, discuss the timing and who the contacts for the utility and the contractor will be. Make sure everyone is clear on what communication has to take place to have the work go smoothly.

It is a good idea to have a weekly or bi-weekly utility-contractor meeting during the early stages of the project, especially on urban projects or large grading projects. Establish the schedule and location for these meetings at the Preconstruction Meeting.

Make sure that every utility company provides a contact person’s name and telephone number, it may have changed from what is provided in the plan. If the utility company is using a subcontractor to do their work be sure that contact information is provided for them as well. Exchange numbers for office telephones, pagers, cellular/mobile telephones, and faxes. The contractor should also be providing similar information to the utility companies, as well as the field office location.

Discuss any issues that affect utilities early in the preconstruction meeting. The schedule of the highway contractor is certainly an item of interest to the utilities, especially if they must coordinate some work during construction. If there are environmentally sensitive areas on the project, and there is utility relocation work that has not yet been completed, be sure that the constraints of the sensitive areas are

brought to the attention of the affected utility companies. Erosion control may be another item that needs to be discussed with utility companies.

Once all the items that affect the utilities have been discussed, tell the utilities that they are free to leave if they wish. Their time is valuable and we will get better participation in our meetings if they don't feel they are wasting their time while we discuss other project issues that don't affect them.

The utility coordination discussions that occur at the preconstruction meeting must be documented. The person responsible for utility coordination may want to take his or her own notes of this portion of the meeting. They have a special interest in that aspect of the project, and their notes may be more detailed than the general notes of the meeting. Any format can be used. Some of the essential information that needs to be documented is shown in [Figure 19-2](#).

AFTER THE MEETING

Follow-up on anything that was not clarified at the meeting. If any utilities were not present, contact them to inform them of any information discussed at the meeting that may impact their facilities or their work plan. If there is anything that needs clarifying or if work is not done as stated in the special provisions, call the utility and get the answers that are needed. Inform them of the contractor's schedule and make sure they will be out of the way on time.

Wisconsin Department of Transportation

July 5, 2000

RILEY HENINGER
WATERTOWN SEWER & WATER UTILITY
108 FREMONT STREET
WATERTOWN WI 53094

Dear Mr. Heninger,

Project ID: 1336-02-70
Watertown-Lebanon Road
(CTH R-CTH H)
STH 85 Dodge County

The preconstruction meeting for the above project is scheduled for Wednesday March 17, 1999 in Room 107 of Watertown City Hall at 1:00 PM. The contractor for this project is Ben's Backhoe & Company.

You are invited to attend this meeting and your participation would be appreciated. Should you have any questions concerning the meeting or the project, please contact Mike Berg at (xxx) xxx-xxxx.

If your work plan calls for doing some of your relocation or adjustment work during highway construction, it is very important that you attend the meeting and coordinate your efforts with the contractor. If, on the other hand, you have completed all of your relocation work (or none is required) you may simply call me or Mike Berg at the numbers listed and let us know that.

If you are unable to attend and your relocations are not complete yet, please contact me or Mike Berg so that we can relay the current status of your work to our contractor. Again, we hope that you can attend the meeting if this is the case, but we understand that there are times when you have other commitments.

Sincerely,

Karisa Rusch, P.E.
Region Project Development Supervisor
(xxx) xxx-xxxx

PRECONSTRUCTION MEETING

Project ID #

Road:

Section:

Highway:

County:

Date:

Project Engineer:

Contractor:

Construction Start:

Detour Start:

Utilities Present:

Electric:

Gas:

Telephone:

Cable TV:

Water/Sewer:

Comments:

Wisconsin Department of Transportation

February 14, 1999

RILEY HENINGER
WATERTOWN SEWER & WATER UTILITY
108 FREMONT STREET
WATERTOWN WI 53094

Dear Mr. Heninger,

Project ID: 1336-02-70
Watertown-Lebanon Road
(CTH R-CTH H)
STH 85 Dodge County

The preconstruction meeting for the above project is scheduled for Wednesday March 17, 1999 in Room 107 of Watertown City Hall at 1:00 PM. The contractor for this project is Ben's Backhoe & Company.

You are invited to attend this meeting and **your participation is required by Trans. 220.05(4)** which states "***When the department determines there is a potential for conflict between work plans, the department will schedule a meeting that the owners are required to attend to coordinate the work.***"

Because your work plan calls for doing some of your relocation or adjustment work during highway construction, your attendance is mandatory at this meeting so that you can coordinate your efforts with the contractor. If you have completed all of your relocation work, you may simply call me or Mike Berg at the numbers listed and let us know that.

If you are unable to attend and your relocations are not complete yet, please contact me or Mike Berg so that we can relay the current status of your work to our contractor. Failure to attend the meeting will put your company in violation of Trans. 220, which could result in liability for damages to the highway contractor.

Should you have any questions concerning the meeting or the project, please contact Mike Berg at (xxx) xxx-xxxx.

Sincerely,

Karisa Rusch, P.E.
Region Project Development Supervisor
(xxx) xxx-xxxx